



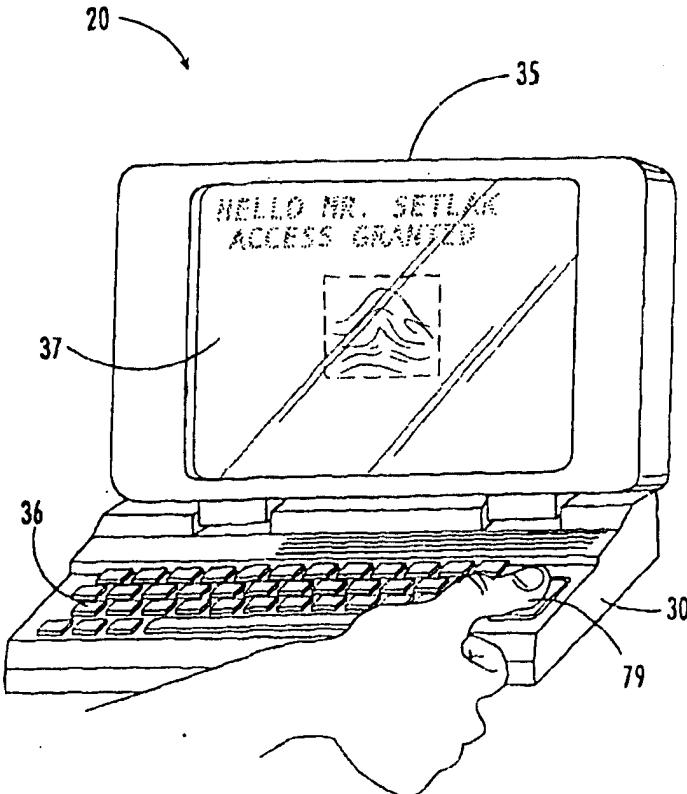
INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification ⁷ : G06K 9/00		A1	(11) International Publication Number: WO 00/68873 (43) International Publication Date: 16 November 2000 (16.11.00)
(21) International Application Number: PCT/US00/12784	(22) International Filing Date: 10 May 2000 (10.05.00)	(81) Designated States: AE, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BR, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZW, ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, SD, SI, SZ, TZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).	
(30) Priority Data: 60/133,414 11 May 1999 (11.05.99) US 09/567,645 9 May 2000 (09.05.00) US			
(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): AUTHENTEC, INC. [US/US]; 709 South Harbor City Boulevard, Melbourne, FL 32901 (US).			
(72) Inventor; and (73) Inventor/Applicant (for US only): SETLAK, Dale, R. [US/US]; 3633 Sandy Crane Court, Melbourne, FL 32934 (US).		Published With international search report. Before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of the receipt of amendments.	
(74) Agent: REGAN, Christopher; Allen, Dyer, Doppelt, Milbrath & Gilchrist, P.A., Suite 1401, 255 S. Orange Avenue, P.O. Box 3791, Orlando, FL 32802-3791 (US).			

(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR CREATING A COMPOSITE FINGERPRINT IMAGE

(57) Abstract

A method and apparatus generates fingerprint data for a fingerprint area larger than a sensing area of a fingerprint sensor. A fingerprint of a user is enrolled by generating fingerprint data sets responsive to placing a finger of a user on a sensing area of the fingerprint sensor a plurality of times with the finger being slightly repositioned on successive placements. The method also includes processing the fingerprint data sets to generate a composite fingerprint data set over an area of the fingerprint larger than the sensing area of the fingerprint sensor. The method may also be extended to the matching of a new fingerprint to an enrolled fingerprint based upon at least one sensing of the new fingerprint and the composite fingerprint data sets. A plurality of fingerprint feature location data sets may be generated and include at least one of a plurality of minutiae location data sets, a plurality of skin pore location data sets, and a plurality of feature location data sets relating to fingerprint ridge flows.



FOR THE PURPOSES OF INFORMATION ONLY

Codes used to identify States party to the PCT on the front pages of pamphlets publishing international applications under the PCT.

AL	Albania	ES	Spain	LS	Lesotho	SI	Slovenia
AM	Armenia	FI	Finland	LT	Lithuania	SK	Slovakia
AT	Austria	FR	France	LU	Luxembourg	SN	Senegal
AU	Australia	GA	Gabon	LV	Latvia	SZ	Swaziland
AZ	Azerbaijan	GB	United Kingdom	MC	Monaco	TD	Chad
BA	Bosnia and Herzegovina	GE	Georgia	MD	Republic of Moldova	TG	Togo
BB	Barbados	GH	Ghana	MG	Madagascar	TJ	Tajikistan
BE	Belgium	GN	Guinea	MK	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	TM	Turkmenistan
BF	Burkina Faso	GR	Greece	ML	Mali	TR	Turkey
BG	Bulgaria	HU	Hungary	MN	Mongolia	TT	Trinidad and Tobago
BJ	Benin	IE	Ireland	MR	Mauritania	UA	Ukraine
BR	Brazil	IL	Israel	MW	Malawi	UG	Uganda
BY	Belarus	IS	Iceland	MX	Mexico	US	United States of America
CA	Canada	IT	Italy	NE	Niger	UZ	Uzbekistan
CF	Central African Republic	JP	Japan	NL	Netherlands	VN	Viet Nam
CG	Congo	KE	Kenya	NO	Norway	YU	Yugoslavia
CH	Switzerland	KG	Kyrgyzstan	NZ	New Zealand	ZW	Zimbabwe
CI	Côte d'Ivoire	KP	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	PL	Poland		
CM	Cameroon	KR	Republic of Korea	PT	Portugal		
CN	China	KZ	Kazakhstan	RO	Romania		
CU	Cuba	LC	Saint Lucia	RU	Russian Federation		
CZ	Czech Republic	LI	Liechtenstein	SD	Sudan		
DE	Germany	LK	Sri Lanka	SE	Sweden		
DK	Denmark	LR	Liberia	SG	Singapore		
EE	Estonia						

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR CREATING A COMPOSITE FINGERPRINT IMAGE

Related Application

This application is based upon prior filed copending provisional application Serial No. 60/133,414 filed May 11, 1999.

5 Field of the Invention

The invention relates to the field of fingerprint processing, and, more particularly, to the field of storing a database of fingerprint data and matching a new fingerprint to the database.

10 Background of the Invention

Fingerprint matching is a reliable and widely used technique for personal identification or verification. In particular, a common approach to fingerprint identification involves scanning a sample 15 fingerprint or an image thereof, converting it into electrical signals, and storing the image and/or unique characteristics of the fingerprint image. The characteristics of a sample or new fingerprint may be compared to information for reference fingerprints 20 already in storage to determine or verify a person's identity.

Unfortunately, comparing a sample fingerprint to a large number of reference fingerprints may be prohibitively expensive and/or simply take too long.

-2-

Accordingly, fingerprints are typically classified into a plurality of discrete sets and/or subsets in the form of a hierarchical tree to thereby expedite searching.

For example, a common top level classification for 5 fingerprints usually differentiates the prints into the classes of: plain whorl, plain loop, tented arch, etc. based upon broad ridge pattern types. These classes may be yet further divided into subclasses.

Accordingly, a fingerprint sample to be searched, once 10 itself classified, can be more efficiently compared to only those prints in the respective classes and subclasses of the search tree. For example, U.S. Patent No. 5,465,303 to Levison et al. describes both the widely used Henry classification system and the 15 Vucetich classification system.

When the quality of the original copy of a fingerprint is bad, the print may contain many local distortions of the ridge pattern which may result in incorrect orientation of the fingerprint. U.S. Patent 20 No. 5,140,642 to Hsu et al. is directed to a method for determining the actual position of a core point of a fingerprint based upon finding ridge flows and assigning a direction code, correcting the ridge flows, and allocating the core point based upon the corrected 25 direction codes. Along these lines, U.S. Patent No. 5,040,224 to Hara discloses an approach to preprocessing fingerprints to correctly determine a position of the core of each fingerprint image for later matching by minutiae patterns.

30 Fingerprint minutiae, the branches or bifurcations and end points of the fingerprint ridges, are often used to determine a match between a sample print and a reference print database. For example, U.S. Patent Nos. 3,859,633 and 3,893,080 both to Ho et

-3-

al. are directed to fingerprint identification based upon fingerprint minutiae matching.

U.S. Patent No. 4,151,512 to Riganati et al. describes a fingerprint classification method using extracted ridge contour data. The ridge flow in the fingerprint pattern and minutiae data are identified and extracted from a fingerprint pattern. Topological data, identifying singularity points such as tri-radii and cores, as well as ridge flow line tracings related to those points are extracted from the ridge contour data. The extracted information is used to automatically perform classification of the fingerprint patterns and/or matching of the fingerprint pattern with patterns stored in a mass file.

15 U.S. Patent No. 5,845,005 to Setlak et al., and assigned to the assignee of the present invention, discloses a significant advance in the area of fingerprint indexing and searching of a database of reference fingerprints to determine a match. In 20 particular, index values are calculated which are generally evenly distributed and continuous over a relatively large population of individuals. The index values may be determined based upon ridge flow curvature of the fingerprints. A particularly 25 advantageous index, called a curliness index, is disclosed and this index is based upon an aggregate of a magnitude of a rate of change of ridge direction vectors.

Other important advances have also been made 30 in the area of integrated circuit fingerprint sensors, as disclosed, for example, in U.S. Patent Nos. 5,828,773 and 5,862,248, both assigned to the assignee of the present invention. The disclosed sensors are based upon generating an electric field which can sense 35 the ridges of a fingerprint despite contamination, skin

- 4 -

surface damage, and other factors. The sensor is relatively compact and rugged.

Despite improvements in sensor technology and in fingerprint enrollment and matching approaches, 5 processing is still computationally intensive thus limiting widespread use of fingerprint sensing. In addition, sensing typically requires a relatively large sensor area to ensure accurate results. The sensor size has an important bearing on the sensor cost, 10 especially for the new class of integrated circuit fingerprint sensors.

Summary of the Invention

In view of the foregoing background, it is therefore an object of the invention to provide a 15 method and fingerprint sensor apparatus for enrolling and/or matching a fingerprint, and to reduce computations and/or permit the sensing surface to be relatively small.

This and other objects, features and 20 advantages in accordance with the present invention are provided in one embodiment by a method for generating fingerprint data for a fingerprint area larger than a sensing area of a fingerprint sensor. The method preferably comprises enrolling a fingerprint of a user 25 by generating a plurality of fingerprint data sets responsive to placing a finger of a user on a sensing area of the fingerprint sensor a plurality of times with the finger being slightly repositioned on successive placements. The method also preferably 30 includes processing the plurality of fingerprint data sets to generate a composite fingerprint data set over an area of the fingerprint larger than the sensing area of the fingerprint sensor. Of course, the method may also be extended to the matching of a new fingerprint 35 to an enrolled fingerprint based upon at least one

-5-

sensing of the new fingerprint and the composite fingerprint data set.

The step of matching may include comparing a predetermined number of sensings of the new fingerprint with the composite fingerprint data set to achieve a desired performance, such as a desired false reject rate, and/or a desired false acceptance rate. The step of generating a plurality of data sets preferably comprises generating a plurality of fingerprint feature location data sets. The feature location data sets may comprise at least one of a plurality of minutiae location data sets, a plurality of skin pore location data sets, and a plurality of feature location data sets relating to fingerprint ridge flows.

15 The step of processing may comprise determining a core location for each data set. In addition, the step of processing may comprise accounting for distortion of the finger surface in the plurality of data sets. For example, the step of 20 accounting for distortion preferably comprises calculating centroids of fingerprint feature locations relative to a reference frame or location, such as the fingerprint core position.

25 The step of generating the plurality of fingerprint data sets may preferably comprise generating a predetermined number of fingerprint data sets based upon the predetermined number of finger placements within a predetermined time. For example, the predetermined number may be in a range of about 2 30 to 5.

Another aspect of the invention relates to the fingerprint sensor apparatus. The fingerprint sensor apparatus preferably includes a fingerprint sensing area, and an enrolment circuit for enrolling a 35 fingerprint of a user by generating a plurality of

-6-

fingerprint data sets responsive to placing a finger of a user on the fingerprint sensing area a plurality of times with the finger being slightly repositioned on successive placements. The enrollment circuit also 5 preferably processes the plurality of fingerprint data sets to generate a composite fingerprint data set over an area of the fingerprint larger than the fingerprint sensing area.

The processor preferably further comprises a 10 match determining circuit for determining a match between a new fingerprint and an enrolled fingerprint based upon at least one sensing of the new fingerprint and the composite fingerprint data sets. The match determining circuit may include a comparor to compare a 15 predetermined number of sensings of the new fingerprint with the composite fingerprint data set to achieve a desired performance, such as a at least one of a false reject rate and a desired false acceptance rate.

The enrollment circuit preferably generates a 20 plurality of fingerprint feature location data sets.

The feature location data sets may be minutiae location data sets, skin pore location data sets, and/or feature location data sets relating to fingerprint ridge flows.

The enrollment circuit preferably determines 25 a core location for each data set, and accounts for distortion of the finger surface in the plurality of data sets. The circuit may account for distortion by calculating centroids of fingerprint feature locations relative to a reference frame or location, such as the 30 fingerprint core.

Brief Description of the Drawings

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a laptop computer including a fingerprint sensor and associated processing software to define an embodiment of the

- 7 -

fingerprint sensing apparatus in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a schematic block diagram of the fingerprint sensing apparatus in accordance with the 5 present invention.

FIG. 3 is a flow chart of a method for generating composite data sets in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 4 is a flow chart of a method for 10 comparing a new fingerprint to composite data sets to determine a match in accordance with the present invention.

FIGS. 5 through 8 are fingerprint images for a plurality of finger placements in accordance with the 15 present invention.

FIG. 9 is a composite/matching image determined from the minutiae of the fingerprint images of FIGS. 5-8 overlaid on a new fingerprint image and feature location data set in accordance with the 20 present invention.

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

The present invention will now be described more fully hereinafter with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which preferred embodiments 25 of the invention are shown. This invention may, however, be embodied in many different forms and should not be construed as limited to the embodiments set forth herein. Rather, these embodiments are provided so that this disclosure will be thorough and complete, 30 and will fully convey the scope of the invention to those skilled in the art. Like numbers refer to like elements throughout.

Referring initially to FIGS. 1 and 2, the general components and features of the fingerprint 35 sensing apparatus 20 of the present invention are now

-8-

described. As shown in FIG. 1, the apparatus 20 in one embodiment includes a fingerprint sensor 30 mounted on the keyboard surface 36 of a laptop computer 35. The laptop computer 35 also illustratively includes a 5 foldable display 37. Processing of fingerprint image data may be shared between processing circuitry on the fingerprint sensor 30 and the microprocessor of the computer as would be readily understood by those skilled in the art.

10 The invention may permit a properly authorized person to become enrolled into a security or access control procedure for the computer 35. One or more persons may be enrolled as will be described below. To use the computer 35 or to have access to 15 certain files, the user's finger 79 is placed onto the fingerprint sensor 30 and a match is determined with respect to the enrolled authorized persons. If a match is not determined, then access to operate the computer 35 or access to certain files is denied as will be 20 readily appreciated by those skilled in the art. Of course, if a match is determined, the person may be greeted by a visual or audible announcement, and access is granted.

25 The fingerprint sensor 30 may preferably be of a type that uses electric field sensing of the ridges and valleys of a live fingerprint. Moreover the fingerprint sensor is desirably relatively compact, especially for the application in combination with a laptop computer 35. For example, the fingerprint 30 sensor 30 may an integrated circuit electric field sensor as offered by AuthenTec, the assignee of the present invention. Various features and attributes of suitable fingerprint sensors are described in U.S. Patent Nos. 5,826,773; 5,862,248; and 5,940,526 and

- 9 -

U.S. patent application attorney work docket no. 51503, filed concurrently herewith, entitled "Fingerprint Sensor With Leadframe Bent Pin Conductive Path and Associated Methods", all assigned to the assignee of the present invention. The subject matter of each of these patents and patent application is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

Those of skill in the art will recognize that the apparatus 20 in accordance with the present invention can be implemented in a number of forms in addition to incorporation into the illustrated laptop computer 35 of FIG. 1. For example, the processing circuitry may be incorporated into the integrated circuit of the fingerprint sensor 30, or may be included in associated circuitry within an overall fingerprints sensor package.

Referring more particularly to FIG. 2, the illustrated apparatus 20 includes an enrollment circuit 21 and a match determining circuit 22. In some embodiments, either of these circuits may operate without the other; however, the composite data sets database 43 is shared between the two circuits. The circuits 20,22 can be implemented in a microprocessor operating under stored program control as will be readily appreciated by those skilled in the art.

Fingerprint image information from the fingerprint sensor 30 is first processed in the feature location data set generator 40 which generates the data sets for a predetermined number of finger placements, with each placement being slightly offset from the prior placement. As will be readily understood by those skilled in the art, the variation in placement may occur naturally, or may be guided, for example, by indicators on the computer 35. Such finger positioning

-10-

guidance indication is further described in U.S. Patent No. 5,828,773 and needs no further discussion herein.

The feature location data sets may be based upon fingerprint minutiae, fingerprint pores, or 5 fingerprint ridge flows. Fingerprint minutiae and pore location are highly developed as will be appreciated by those skilled in the art. Fingerprint ridge flow analysis and related indexes are described in U.S. Patent No. 5,845,005, for example. Other data sets are 10 also contemplated by the invention as will be appreciated by those skilled in the art.

The number of data sets to enroll a finger may vary depending upon the particular application.

For many applications, the number of finger placements 15 and corresponding number of data sets may be about 2 to 5. The number is preferably convenient for the user, but which provides the advantages of the present invention. The data set for each finger placement is generated over a first area, typically defined by the 20 fingerprint sensing area.

Downstream from the feature location data sets generator 40 is a filter and skin distortion processing block 41. The filter and skin distortion processing block 41 may remove undesired weak features 25 or artifact features from processing. In addition, the processing block 41 may determine the location of the fingerprint features relative to a predetermined frame of reference, such as based upon the fingerprint core. Determination of the fingerprint core will be readily 30 understood by those skilled in the art without requiring further discussion herein.

A centroid, for example, may be calculated for each similar feature in different data sets. Of course, skin distortion will cause those features 35 further from the core to appear to have a greater

-11-

spacing. Thus the determination of what is the same feature on different placements is determined based upon the distance from the core, for example. Those skilled in the art will recognize other similar processing that can be performed to ensure that successive data sets can be correlated one to the other(s).

In particular, downstream from the filter and distortion processing block 41, is located the composite data set generator 42. As will be appreciated by those skilled in the art, because multiple finger placements at slightly different positions are processed, the composite data set can correspond to a larger area than the first area for each finger sensing. This first area typically being limited by the size of the sensing area of the fingerprint sensor 30. In other words, the second area of the composite data set is larger than any of the individual fingerprint sensings of the finger during enrollment. Accordingly, two significant advantages are available. First, the size of the sensing area of the fingerprint sensor 30 can be reduced. For an integrated circuit embodiment of the fingerprint sensor 30, substantial savings can be realized by reducing the needed sensing area.

Second, the positioning of the finger to be matched may be relaxed. In other words, since the new fingerprint feature set is compared to a larger composite data set, positioning of the finger is not as critical. Both of these noted advantages of the invention can be realized, or trade-offs can be made. In addition, reductions can also be realized in the calculations required.

-12-

Referring now more particularly to the lower portion of FIG. 2, the match determining circuit 22 is further described. This circuit 22 is shown connected to the same fingerprint sensor 30, as will typically be 5 the case. However, in other embodiments, a different fingerprint sensor, and perhaps having a different sensing area, may also be used.

The fingerprint sensor 30 is connected to the new fingerprint feature location data set generator 10 block 41. For example, this block 41 may generate a set of minutiae locations, pore locations, or ridge flow related location data, as described above for the enrollment. The data set from the new fingerprint feature location data set generator 41 is input to the 15 comparor 45 which, in turn, is also connected to the composite data sets database 43. The comparor 45 compares the new fingerprint feature location data set with those already stored to determine if a match exists. The various processing algorithms for 20 determining a match will be readily appreciated by those skilled in the art without requiring further discussion herein.

If a correct match between the new fingerprint and one stored in the database 43 is 25 determined, such may be indicated by the schematically illustrated match indicator 46. For example, the match indicator 46 may be a message on the display screen 37 of the laptop computer 35. Alternately or in addition thereto, a match indication may be indicated simply by 30 granting the user access or permission to continue.

Turning now to the flow chart of FIG. 3, the method steps for enrolling a fingerprint of a user are now described in greater detail. From the start (block 50) the user positions or places his finger on the

-13-

fingerprint sensor 30 at Block 52. The fingerprint sensor has a first area. A feature location data set is generated at Block 54. At Block 56 the number of times the finger has been positioned is determined and 5 if the number is not sufficient, that is, less than the desired number N, then the process returns to Block 52.

If N data sets have been generated as determined at Block 56 then the method proceeds to the filter and accounting for skin distortion at Block 58 10 as described in greater detail above. The N data sets are preferably collected over a predetermined period of time to ensure that only the desired user is enrolling. In other words, a learning or enrolling window is 15 opened for only a predetermined time to thereby increase security as will be appreciated by those skilled in the art.

At Block 60 a composite data set is stored in a database 43, and the process stops (Block 62). Of course, the process may be repeated for a number of 20 users to be enrolled into the database 43 as will be readily appreciated by those skilled in the art.

Turning now additionally to the flow chart of FIG. 4, the method of matching a new fingerprint is described in greater detail. From the start (Block 25 70), the finger is positioned on the fingerprint sensor 30 at Block 72. A new feature location data set is generated at Block 74. If the finger has been properly positioned and the data is acceptable as determined at Block 76, the new data set is compared to the composite 30 data sets in the database 43. If the position or data at Block 76 is not acceptable then the user may reposition his finger 79 and repeat the process. If a match is determined at Block 80, a match is indicated at Block 98 before the process terminates (Block 98).

-14-

In addition, as would be readily understood by those skilled in the art, the matching may include comparing a predetermined number of sensings of the new fingerprint with the composite fingerprint data sets.

5 The number of matchings may be determined to achieve a desired performance, such as a desired false reject rate, and/or a desired false acceptance rate.

If after comparing the new data set to the data sets in the composite database 43, a number of 10 retries R is checked at Block 90, and if the number of retries R is less than a predetermined threshold (Block 92) the process is repeated. If the number of retries at Block 92 is greater than the threshold a failure is indicated and access may be denied at Block 94.

15 Turning now to FIGS. 5-8, a series of fingerprint images for a finger being enrolled are shown. A frame of reference 100 is shown in each of the figures. The frame of reference is based upon the core of the fingerprint, although rotation of the 20 different images is not illustrated but can be readily calculated based upon the location of the fingerprint minutiae. Various minutiae are located in the images as would be readily understood by those skilled in the art. FIGS. 6-8 also include respective labeled areas 25 A, B and C enclosing respective groups of minutiae points.

The labeled areas A, B and C include minutiae points which are illustrated in the composite/matching image of FIG. 9. The 30 composite/matching image shows the location of the minutiae points based upon the successive finger placements (FIGS. 5-8). In addition, the new fingerprint image is superimposed on the minutiae in the figure as will be appreciated by those skilled in

-15-

the art. As will also be understood by those skilled in the art, other fingerprint features can also be similarly processed and analyzed.

Many modifications and other embodiments of
5 the invention will come to the mind of one skilled in
the art having the benefit of the teachings presented
in the foregoing descriptions and the associated
drawings. Therefore, it is to be understood that the
invention is not to be limited to the specific
10 embodiments disclosed, and that modifications and
embodiments are intended to be included within the
scope of the appended claims.

-16-

THAT WHICH IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for generating fingerprint data for a fingerprint area larger than a sensing area of a fingerprint sensor, the method comprising:

generating a plurality of fingerprint data sets responsive to placing a finger of a user on the sensing area of the fingerprint sensor a plurality of times with the finger being slightly repositioned on successive placements; and

10 processing the plurality of fingerprint data sets to generate a composite fingerprint data set over a size of the fingerprint larger than the sensing area of the fingerprint sensor.

2. A method according to Claim 1 wherein generating a plurality of fingerprint data sets comprises generating a plurality of fingerprint feature location data sets.

3. A method according to Claim 2 wherein generating a plurality of fingerprint feature location data sets comprises generating a plurality of minutiae location data sets.

4. A method according to Claim 2 wherein generating a plurality of fingerprint feature location data sets comprises generating a plurality of skin pore location data sets.

5. A method according to Claim 2 wherein generating a plurality of fingerprint feature location data sets comprises generating a plurality of feature location data sets relating to fingerprint ridge flows.

6. A method according to Claim 2 wherein generating a plurality of fingerprint feature location data sets comprises determining the feature locations with respect to a reference frame.

-17-

7. A method according to Claim 6 wherein the reference frame is based upon a fingerprint core location.

8. A method according to Claim 1 wherein processing comprises accounting for distortion of the finger surface in the plurality of fingerprint data sets.

9. A method according to Claim 8 wherein generating a plurality of fingerprint data sets comprises generating a plurality of fingerprint feature location data sets; and wherein the step of accounting for distortion comprises calculating centroids of fingerprint feature locations relative to a reference location.

10. A method according to Claim 9 wherein the reference location comprises a fingerprint core location.

11. A method according to Claim 1 wherein generating the plurality of fingerprint data sets comprises generating a predetermined number of fingerprint data sets based upon the predetermined number of finger placements within a predetermined time.

12. A method according to Claim 10 wherein the predetermined number of finger placement comprises a number in a range of about 2 to 5.

13. A method according to Claim 1 wherein the fingerprint sensor comprises a fingerprint sensing integrated circuit.

14. A method for using a fingerprint sensor comprising:

enrolling a fingerprint of a user by generating a plurality of fingerprint data sets responsive to placing a finger of a user on a sensing area of the fingerprint

-18-

sensor a plurality of times with the finger being slightly repositioned on successive placements, and

5 processing the plurality of fingerprint data sets to generate a composite fingerprint data set over an area of the fingerprint larger than the sensing area of the fingerprint sensor; and

10 matching a new fingerprint to an enrolled fingerprint based upon at least one sensing of the new fingerprint and the composite fingerprint data sets.

15 15. A method according to Claim 14 wherein matching comprises comparing at least one sensing of the new fingerprint with the composite fingerprint data sets to achieve a desired performance.

16. A method according to Claim 15 wherein the desired performance comprises at least one of a desired false acceptance rate and a desired false reject rate.

20 17. A method according to Claim 14 wherein generating a plurality of fingerprint feature location data sets comprises generating a plurality of minutiae location data sets.

25 18. A method according to Claim 14 wherein generating a plurality of fingerprint feature location data sets comprises generating a plurality of skin pore location data sets.

30 19. A method according to Claim 14 wherein generating a plurality of fingerprint feature location data sets comprises generating a plurality of feature location data sets relating to fingerprint ridge flows.

20. A method according to Claim 14 wherein generating a plurality of fingerprint feature location data sets comprises determining the feature locations with respect to a reference frame.

-19-

21. A method according to Claim 20 wherein the reference frame is based upon a fingerprint core location.

22. A method according to Claim 14 wherein processing comprises accounting for distortion of the finger surface in the plurality of fingerprint data sets.

23. A method according to Claim 13 wherein generating a plurality of fingerprint data sets comprises generating a plurality of fingerprint feature location data sets; and wherein the step of accounting for distortion comprises calculating average fingerprint feature locations relative to a reference frame.

24. A method according to Claim 23 wherein the reference frame is based upon a fingerprint core location.

25. A method according to Claim 14 wherein generating the plurality of fingerprint data sets comprises generating a predetermined number of fingerprint data sets based upon the predetermined number of finger placements within a predetermined time.

26. A method according to Claim 25 wherein the predetermined number of finger placement comprises a number in a range of about 2 to 5.

27. A method according to Claim 14 wherein the fingerprint sensor comprises an fingerprint sensing integrated circuit.

28. A fingerprint sensing apparatus comprising:
a fingerprint sensing area; and
an enrollment circuit for enrolling a
5 fingerprint of a user by generating a plurality of
fingerprint data sets responsive to placing a finger of

-20-

a user on the fingerprint sensing area a plurality of times with the finger being slightly repositioned on successive placements, and processing the plurality of fingerprint data sets to generate a composite 5 fingerprint data set over an area of the fingerprint larger than the fingerprint sensing area.

29. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 28 further comprising a match determining circuit for determining a match of a new 10 fingerprint to an enrolled fingerprint based upon at least one sensing of the new fingerprint and the composite fingerprint data sets.

30. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 29 wherein said match determining circuit includes a comparor for comparing at least one sensing of the new fingerprint with the composite fingerprint data sets to achieve a desired performance.

A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 30 wherein the desired performance comprises at least one of a false reject rate and a desired false acceptance rate.

31. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 28 wherein the enrollment circuit generates a plurality of fingerprint feature location data sets.

32. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 28 wherein the enrollment circuit generates a plurality of minutiae location data sets.

33. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 28 wherein the enrollment circuit generates a plurality of skin pore location data sets.

34. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 28 wherein the enrollment circuit generates a plurality of feature location data sets relating to fingerprint ridge flows.

-21-

35. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 28 wherein the enrollment circuit determines a fingerprint core location for each data set.

36. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 28 wherein the enrollment circuit includes a filter and distortion processor to account for distortion of the finger surface in the plurality 5 of fingerprint data sets.

37. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 37 wherein the filter and distortion circuit accounts for distortion by calculating centroids of fingerprint feature locations relative to 10 a reference frame.

38. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 38 wherein the reference frame is based upon a fingerprint core location.

39. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 28 wherein the enrollment circuit generates a predetermined number of fingerprint data sets based upon the predetermined number of finger 5 placements within a predetermined time.

40. A fingerprint sensing apparatus comprising:

a fingerprint sensor including a fingerprint sensing area;

10 an enrollment circuit for enrolling a fingerprint of a user by generating a plurality of fingerprint data sets responsive to placing a finger of a user on the fingerprint sensing area a plurality of times with the finger being slightly repositioned on 15 successive placements, and processing the plurality of fingerprint data sets to generate a composite fingerprint data set over an area of the fingerprint larger than the fingerprint sensing area; and

-22-

a match determining circuit for determining a match of a new fingerprint to an enrolled fingerprint based upon at least one sensing of the new fingerprint and the composite fingerprint data sets.

41. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 41 wherein said match determining circuit includes a comparor for comparing at least one sensing of the new fingerprint with the composite fingerprint data sets to achieve a desired performance.

42. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 42 wherein the desired performance comprises at least one of a false reject rate and a desired false acceptance rate.

43. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 41 wherein the enrollment circuit generates a plurality of fingerprint feature location data sets.

44. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 44 wherein the enrollment circuit generates a plurality of minutiae location data sets.

45. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 44 wherein the enrollment circuit generates a plurality of skin pore location data sets.

46. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 44 wherein the enrollment circuit generates a plurality of feature location data sets relating to fingerprint ridge flows.

47. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 41 wherein the enrollment circuit determines a fingerprint core location for each data set.

48. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 41 wherein the enrollment circuit includes a filter and distortion processor to account

-23-

for distortion of the finger surface in the plurality of fingerprint data sets.

49. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 49 wherein the filter and distortion circuit accounts for distortion by calculating centroids of fingerprint feature locations relative to a reference frame.

50. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 50 wherein the reference frame is based upon a fingerprint core location.

51. A fingerprint sensing apparatus according to Claim 41 wherein the enrollment circuit generates a predetermined number of fingerprint data sets based upon the predetermined number of finger placements within a predetermined time.

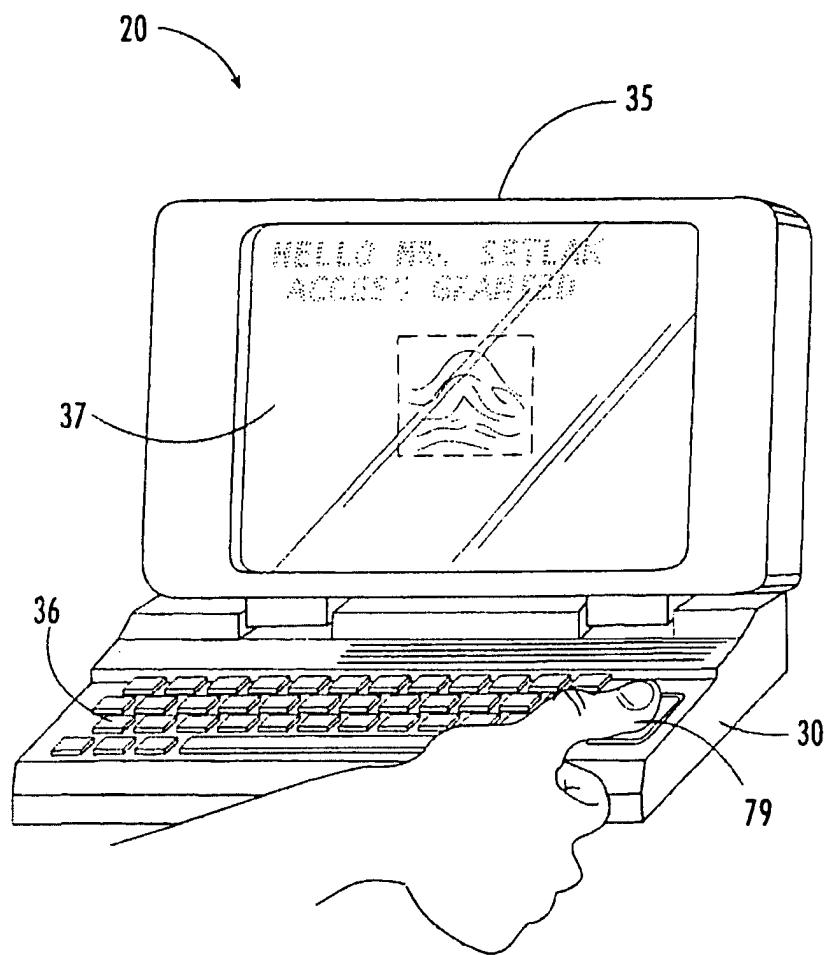
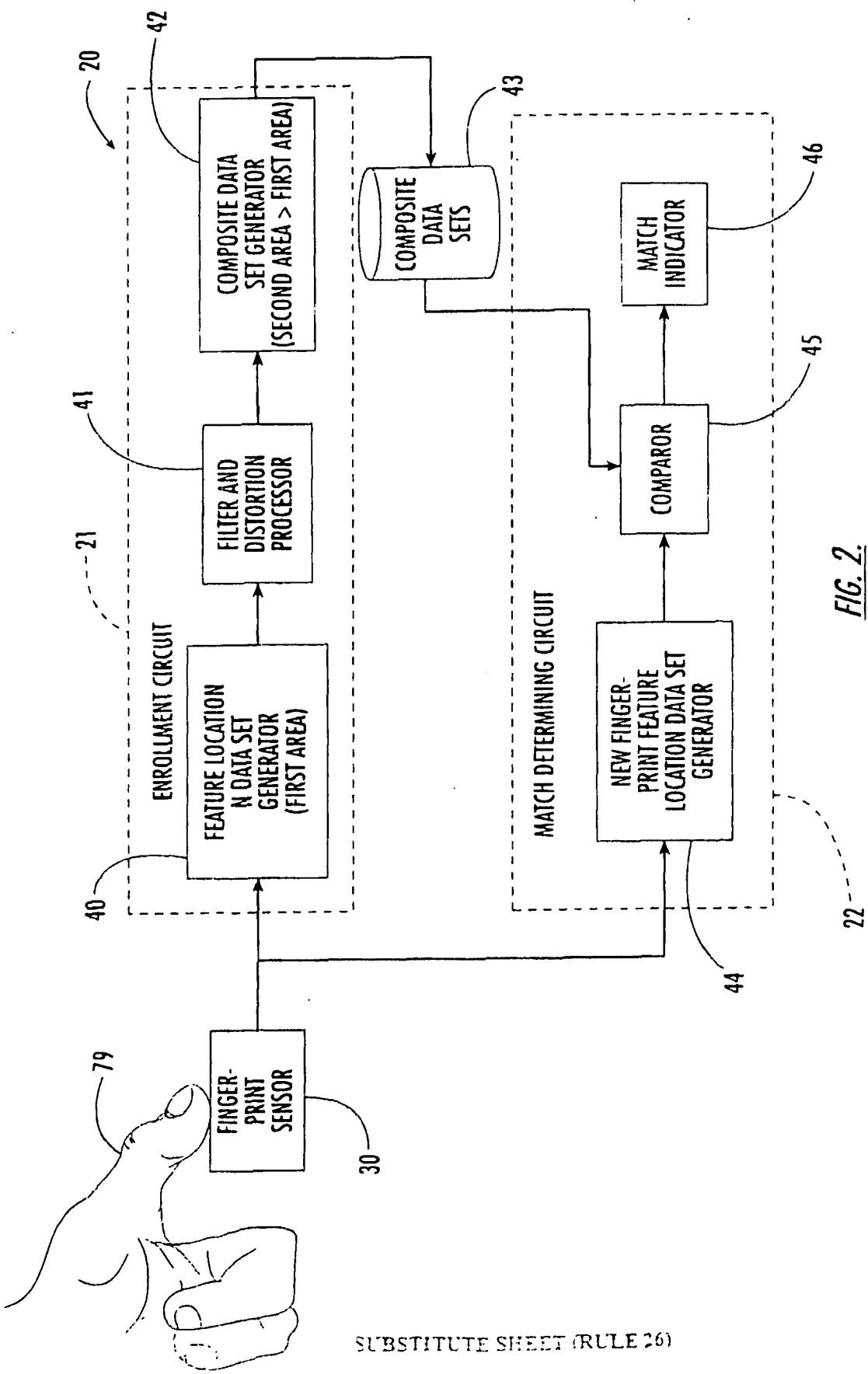


FIG. 1.



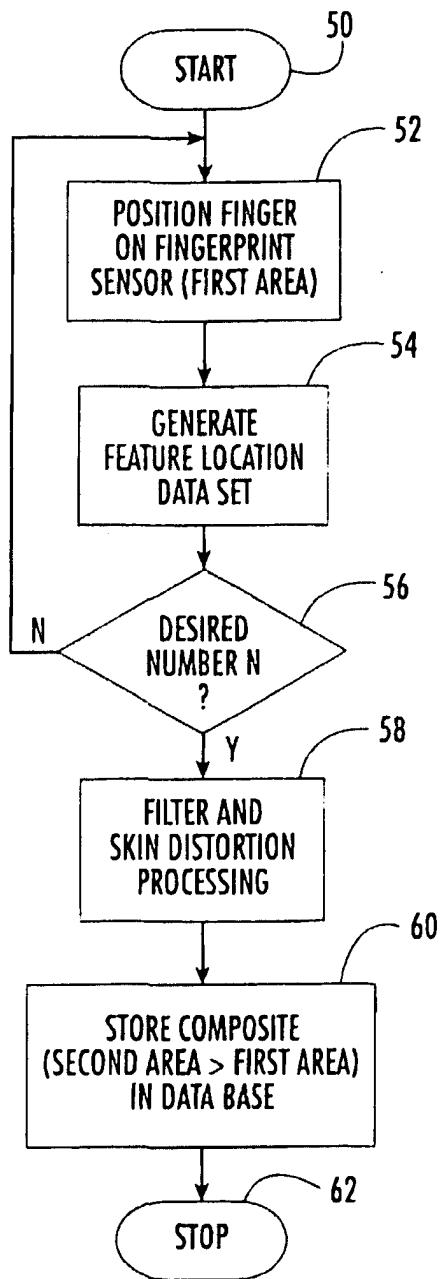


FIG. 3.

4/6

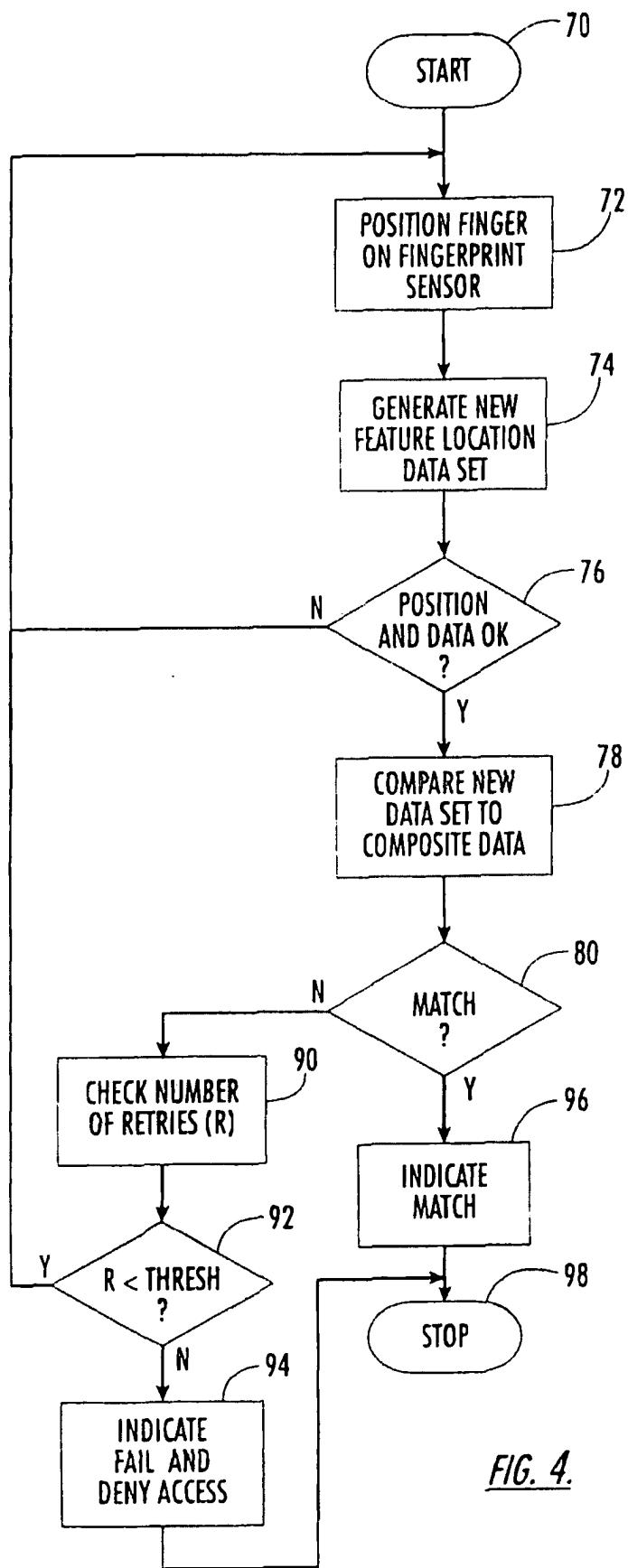


FIG. 4.

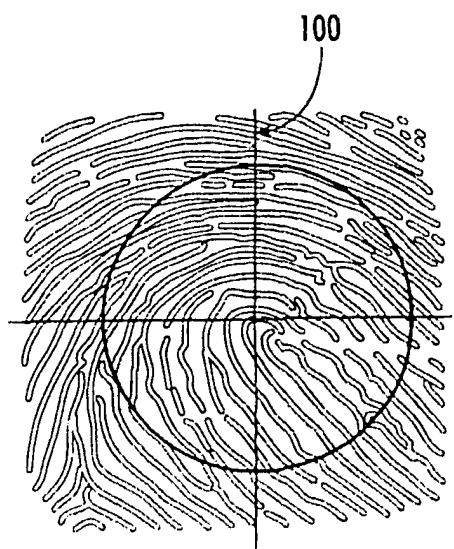


FIG. 5.

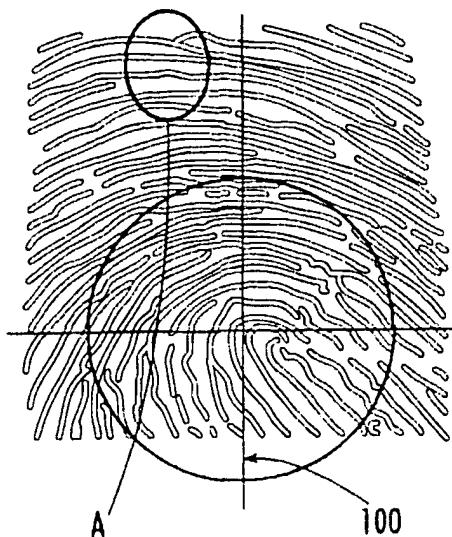


FIG. 6.

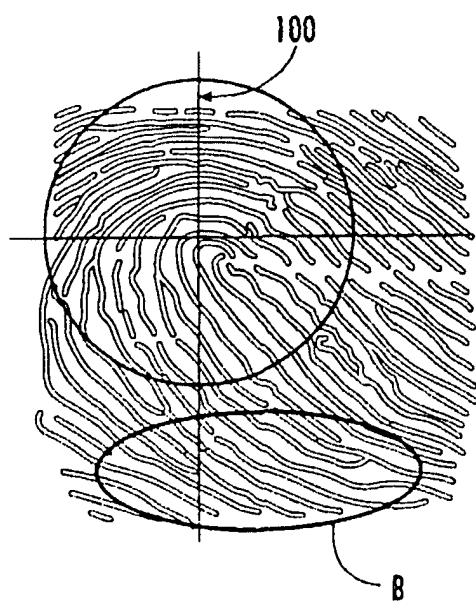


FIG. 7.

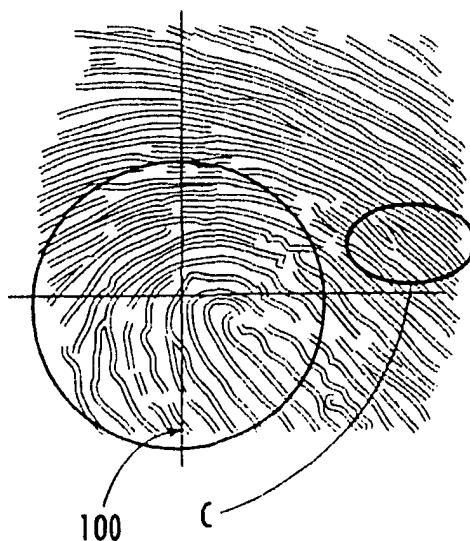


FIG. 8.

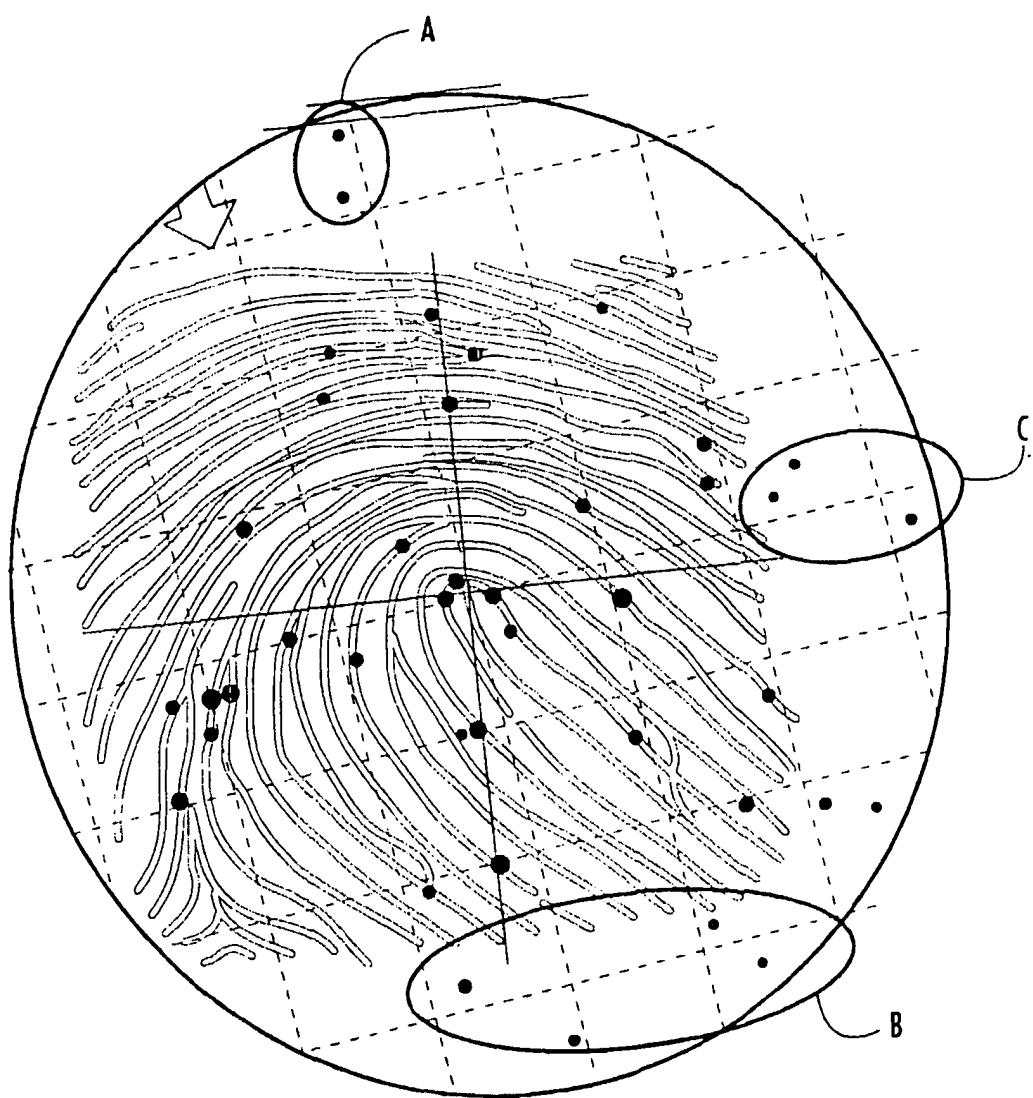


FIG. 9.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Int'l. Appl. No.
PCT/US 00/12784

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 7 G06K9/00

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 G06K

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, INSPEC, PAJ

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	WO 98 46114 A (ARETE ASSOCIATES) 22 October 1998 (1998-10-22) abstract page 29, line 17 - line 24 page 57, line 1 - line 7 page 21, line 8 - line 34 ---	1,8, 13-16, 27-30, 34-42, 46-51
X	EP 0 778 541 A (HAMAMATSU PHOTONICS KK) 11 June 1997 (1997-06-11) abstract --- -/-	1,12,14, 15,26, 28,40,41

Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

Patent family members are listed in annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

- 'A' document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- 'E' earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
- 'L' document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
- 'O' document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- 'P' document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

'T' later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

'X' document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

'Y' document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

'8' document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

30 August 2000

Date of mailing of the international search report

05/09/2000

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.O. 3013 Patentdaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel (+31-70) 340-2040, Fax (+31-70) 340-2166
Fax (+31-70) 340-2166

Authorized officer

Sonius, M

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Inte ~~nter~~ Application No

PCT/US 00/12784

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	WO 99 06942 A (LEE JONATHAN A ; PARE DAVID F (US); SMARTTOUCH INC (US); LAPSLEY PH) 11 February 1999 (1999-02-11) abstract -----	4, 18, 33, 45

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/US 00/12784

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)			Publication date
WO 9846114	A 22-10-1998	AU 6965698	A	11-11-1998	
		CN 1249046	T	29-03-2000	
		EP 0931294	A	28-07-1999	
EP 0778541	A 11-06-1997	JP 9147115	A	06-06-1997	
		DE 69608218	D	15-06-2000	
		US 5910999	A	08-06-1999	
WO 9906942	A 11-02-1999	US 5982914	A	09-11-1999	
		AU 8762998	A	22-02-1999	